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Bayonet forward

Major General Freakley promotes Colonel Swartz at FOB Sharana, Afghanistan.

On the morning of January 13th, the level of anticipation was high, and the temperatures were very low. Combined Task Force Chamberlain soldiers gathered in a horse-shoe formation to observe the promotion of their commander, "Chamberlain 6."

Major General Freakley greeted CTF Chamberlain, and gave great compliments to the accomplishments of the soldiers of CTF Chamberlain. Freakley then turned to the subject of the promotion of "Chamberlain 6" by saying, "this promotion is well deserved and long over due." Freakley took an extended period of time to explain in detail the significance of the rank of Colonel. He highlighted the importance of the eagle having two eyes shown on the Colonel rank insignia. One eye is able to see things from a great distance away granting him overview perspective, while the other eye can hone in on an issue and deal with the details of the situation if necessary.

Following the promotion of COL Swartz, Command Sergeant Major Luce was the first Non-Commissioned Officer to salute COL Swartz. According to tradition, a newly promoted officer gives a silver dollar to the first NCO that salutes. In this case COL Swartz presented him with one dollar in AAFES pogs.

Commanders of our Korean and Polish engineer units were present for the promotion ceremony, and presented COL Swartz with a framed picture commemorating the momentous occasion.



January Greeting from COL Swartz

To the Families of the 240th Engineer Group – Greetings from Afghanistan. One day last week the temperature was nearly 50 degrees, with the sun shining brightly and everyone walking around with no jackets or gloves. It felt like spring, except when the thought occurred to me that this type of weather won't show up in Maine until after WE get there! That was a good reminder that while we are serving here, you are serving in your own way back home. You have been shoveling snow, and keeping the ice off the steps, and getting furnaces fixed, and changing the snow tires on the car. This has been a long haul, and while we are not yet in the final

stretch we can occasionally see the finish line through the haze. I know that it has been a long haul for you, as well, and that you have been sacrificing in many ways that we may not even be aware of. Thank you for what you have done to 'see it through', and to encourage your Soldier in the work he or she is doing here. We need your support, all the way to the finish line.

*COL Les Swartz
CTF Chamberlain
Commanding*



MAJ Darveau reads COL Swartz' promotion orders.



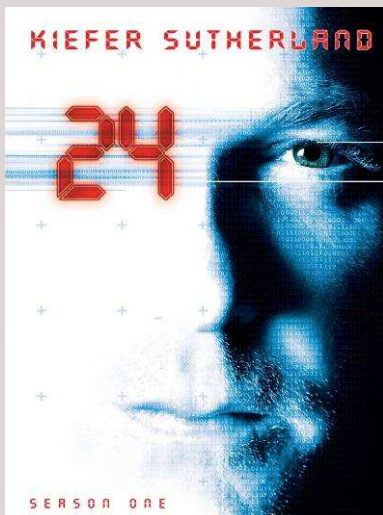
Soldiers from Combined Task Force Chamberlain gather on the cold morning of January 13th, 2007 to witness the promotion of COL Swartz. CSM Luce expresses congratulations to COL Swartz directly following the promotion ceremony.

S-3 News



Two Chinooks touch down at the landing site at FOB Sharana. The soldier's gear and mail are quickly loaded into two 5-Ton trucks.

Happy New Year from your Operations section! What better way to bring in the New Year than with 120mm mortars firing off illumination rounds? We can't think of any! The S-3 has spent a good deal of time unpacking our boxes and setting up our operations center after the short suspense move to Sharana. We have modified it to suit our needs with new tables and cupboards and some custom plasma screen shelving. Those plasmas get some use, but not with mission data as originally intended! My name is Earl season 2 and recently the first season of 24 (a real suspenseful show!) have been broadcasted during lower battle rhythm hours.



New TOC Favorite show.

2007 has had its share of visitors ranging from state Senators, BG Anderson (the new 82nd Airborne Deputy Commanding General) to the Polish command group among many others. CTF Chamberlain seems to be quite popular as of late.

MAJ Doughty, MAJ Darveau, 1LT Morin and SGT Beltran have enjoyed their much deserved time off in Qatar and SSG Shannon and SGT Rogers prepared for theirs. While some were able to fly out of Bagram on schedule, others were stuck at BAF for about a week. Speaking of delays, 1LT Campbell spent over 10* days in Kuwait trying to catch a flight back to Afghanistan on her way back from leave! At one point, with all of the section members enjoying some time off or awaiting transit back to Afghanistan, the S3 section was down to just two representatives!



1LT Stickney stands in the doorway of one of the new billeting "sea huts."

Now that we have been here for a little over a month, it's time to move out of our offices and unused office spaces and move into our new billets which have been recently finished. While they are not as large as the B-Huts back in BAF, they are... New.

The Koreans did a great job building the recently completed Brigade Headquarters and we had a ribbon cutting ceremony for them on January 20th. The building is adorned with wood burnings of Korean symbols, artwork and delicate adornments on the walls. Our favorite addition to the new building, however, is the dedication plaque for CPT Pat Damon.

With the new year here, we say farewell to the 10th Mountain Division (well, most of them) as they depart Afghanistan and head back to Fort Drum and say hello to the 82nd Airborne Division. Not all of the 10th Mountain Division was able to leave theater. Some were extended for another 4 months! We all feel for their families back home and offer our sympathies for their extended stay. The 3rd Brigade Combat Team, known as TF Spartan, will remain in theater and continue to combat the insurgency on the Pakistan border along with the new maneuver brigade that came with the 82nd, known as TF Fury.

With all of these soldiers who are redeploying back to the United States and with the Maneuver forces being extended, our RSOI yard has been packed to the hilt! The inn is full! MAJ Ouellette, MSG Moore, SGT Cyr and our newest member, SPC Levigne have been putting in overtime (that is an understatement) just to keep the place operational. We keep seeing aircraft after aircraft dropping off PAX but none seem to be leaving!

We are all looking forward to the arrival of the 36th Engineer Brigade (CTF Rugged) at some point in March and we continue to look forward to coming home! We all hope you have a wonderful beginning to 2007 and don't forget your New Year's resolutions!

*Article written By 1LT Norman Stickney
Information Operations Officer*



S-3 News (Continued)



COL Swartz and CSM Luce stand with the soldiers of the 961st Detachment, and the Korean engineer company who worked together to complete the Brigade Headquarters.

On 20 January 2007, CTF Chamberlain held a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the completion of the Headquarters and billeting SEA Huts. The ceremony consisted of recognition of the main construction teams for the project as well as speeches and

presentations by those involved followed by the actual cutting of the ribbon, symbolizing the grand open of the Engineer Brigade Headquarters at FOB Sharana.

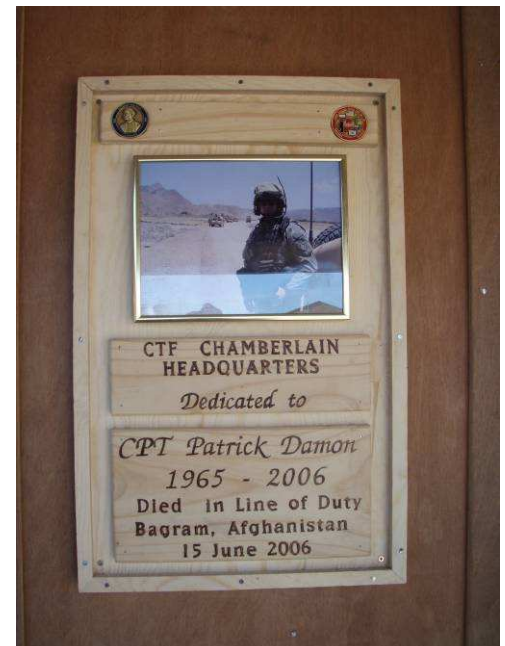
This project was truly a group construction



The ribbon cutting ceremony for the Brigade headquarters and billeting buildings.

effort consisting of works by the 37th Engineer Battalion (TF Eagle), Team Tripod Raven (1st Construction Company of Republic of Korea Engineers) and a part of Team Black Sheep (Detachment 2 of the 961st Utilities Detachment). The project was overseen by Chamberlain's own CMS section. Teamwork, attention to detail and added finishing touches by Team Tripod Raven, make this headquarters and corresponding billeting facilities not only functional but very aesthetically pleasing. Our sincere appreciation goes out to all those who made this project a success an awesome facility for our engineers and those that follow us.

A special addition to the ceremony was the dedication of the new facility to our very own CPT Pat Damon who was lost in the line of duty last summer. A professional plaque, made by our Korean partners, is proudly displayed at the entrance of our headquarters building.



Plaque made by Korean engineers dedicating the new facility in honor of CPT Pat Damon.

*Article by MAJ Richard Darveau,
CTF Chamberlain Assistant S-3
Photos by CPT Becky Lapidow,
TF Eagle PAO*



Camp Badger News



FOB Sharana's own tent city is shown here with all the convenient amenities that go along with the beautiful Camp Badger.

The RSOI, aka Camp Badger seems to attract soldiers to it. What we thought was going to be a lull in soldiers processing through here, has turned around and population has virtually doubled. One battalion of infantrymen received extension orders that will have them stay in theater another four months. So, they are residing here waiting to move to where they will finally live and the new regiment is processing through here as well. Needless to say we are constantly at our bed capacity. This camp has everything a soldier needs. We have our own dining facility, laundry room, briefing area, and moral-welfare- and recreation (MWR) center with weights, TV,

and phones. A recent addition is a HMMWV rollover trainer. Basically, it is a Hummer cab attached to motorized axles that actually turn the cab upside down in a controlled fashion. Many soldiers consider it a ride like you'd find at an amusement park. However, it does provide some valuable safety training to the soldiers coming through Camp Badger.

We have processed approximately 1000 Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen through this site either back to their homes or to the Forward Operating Bases. This will be a continuing mission for us and those numbers will greatly increase.

The services that keep this operation going are always challenging as well. We escort water trucks, black water trucks, watch the fuel truck deliveries, ensure the trash truck stays on course, work with KBR to fix all the broken items, and help soldiers residing here understand what "clean and neat" really means.

SGT Cyr has brought tremendous experience and resourcefulness to the RSOI crew. He has been a real asset. So much so, we've decided to keep him with us through the end of February. Besides his special skills, he also finds a way to bring in many MWR items. These are particularly useful to the soldiers

coming through here as they need many of the basics like soap, shampoo, deodorant, and toothpaste.

We welcome SPC Lavigne to the RSOI crew. He is relieving MSG Moore of some of the more pressing and notorious duties and is learning quickly even though he just arrived in theater. As with SGT Cyr, he has been a great help. Even in his short time here, he has already picked up some of the local language.

MSG Moore continues his duties as NCOIC here at RSOI. He provides the push and makes coordination that needs to happen to make this place function. MSG Moore recently had a close encounter with the waste truck. However bad it was, he made light of it, changed his clothes, and continued the mission.



MAJ Ouellette gives an overview of the layout of Camp Badger to a group of coalition officers who visited the FOB Sharana recently.

Article Submitted by MAJ Ouelette, the OIC of Camp Badger.



Soldiers of the 961st Detachment from Wisconsin pictured in front of the sign bearing the name of the Wisconsin "Badgers."

Construction Management Section News



From the left to right around the completed conference table are SPC Damren, SPC McKenney, MSG Smith, SPC McGee and SPC Marcotte.

January has come and gone for the Construction Management Section and we are yet another month closer to returning home.

The CMS Team in Sharana has been extremely busy this month. Every day has been a challenge for them. Not only have they had to perform their daily construction management activities to keep the subordinate units busy, but they have also been unpacking and moving into their newly finished offices and billets. Those billets are a great treat for all of them. They are especially grand for those that were living in their offices over the past month or so, there is nothing like waking up at work, HOOAH! A great deal of time was also spent setting up the office space in which they are now working. Some tasks they completed include assembling many pieces of office furniture and constructing of a wall for a conference room. Once the room was made it was agreed that there should be a table, so they decided they would build it. SPC Damren, SPC Marcotte, SPC McGee and SPC McKenney did a wonderful job completing this task with the guidance of MSG Smith.

Shortly after the completion of the billets our friends from the 1st Korean Construction Company returned to Bagram. Prior to their departure there was a great ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Brigade buildings, in which they were an integral part. Many soldiers were sad to see the Korean's go because it closes a chapter of their deployment and lives, in which they were part of more than just the United States Army. The close friendships that they had with the Korean soldiers will be greatly missed and remembered.

1LT Davis, the CMS representative in Salerno, has had an important month as well. It takes a certain type of junior officer to do what 1LT Davis does on a daily basis. With the myriad of construction going on in the eastern portion of Afghanistan, 1LT Davis not only coordinates this construction with maneuver units, but more importantly he gives the Brigade commander, COL Swartz, the ground truth.

His daily tasks to provide the necessary information include, but are not limited to, participating in on the ground inspections of current projects, where he checks every aspect of the construction, ensuring that it is to standard. He is also responsible for reviewing all proposed construction work estimates for eastern Afghanistan to ensure that engineers do not over or under estimate project costs while following the standard formulas that they must use in this non-standard country. To top the month off for 1LT Davis he also hosted the US Senator from Maine, Susan Collins. I do not think that you can find a bigger smile on anyone this month, less 1LT Davis.

Sergeant Major Moody remains extremely busy in his role as the Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge (NCOIC) of the Bagram Regional Contracting Center (BAF RCC). SGM Moody is responsible for ensuring that the BAF RCC fulfills its two primary missions: (1) to provide war fighters world-class contracting support and sound business advice, and (2) to enhance strategic partnerships with Afghan communities through integration of the Afghan First Program (AFP), which provides contracting preferences to locals.

In Fiscal Year 2006 alone, the BAF RCC awarded \$220 million to Afghan companies, helping to enhance the local economies and improve the lives of Afghans across the nation. Accomplishing these goals is critical to ensuring long-term success and stability throughout the region. Under his leadership, the BAF RCC has earned such a tremendous reputation in Afghanistan. It is an honor to SGM Moody and Combined Task Force Chamberlain that he was appointed to such a crucial position.



Sergeant Major Moody shakes hands with a local national contractor after signing the first Snow Removal contract of its kind in Afghanistan.

In addition to SGM Moody, the rest of the CMS Team in Bagram (MAJ Scott, SFC Walker, SFC Romano, SSG Gleason and SPC Hopkins) remains busy with Coalition construction projects and are relieved that some of the higher profile projects have recently been completed.

Construction in Afghanistan has proven to be challenging. Winter conditions in the region have been harsher than the CMS was led to expect. However, the Section is adapting to ensure that all missions are properly completed and continues to press on in anxious anticipation of better weather.

Article submitted by MSG Smith, the NCOIC of the CMS Section.



Religious Support Team



Chaplain (LTC) Andy Gibson welcomes several high ranking coalition soldiers to FOB Sharana as they made their first stop at the Davis Memorial Chapel.

Anyone desiring to submit information for the newsletter can send it by e-mail to:

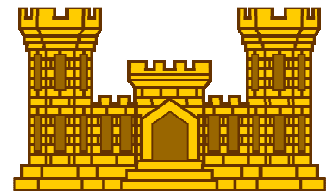
Nathaniel.Grace@afghan.swa.army.mil

Further pictures can be found at the 240th Engineer Group's website:

http://www.me.ngb.army.mil/Family/Family_Pages/240th/default.htm

Packages and letters sent to soldiers who are at FOB Sharana should be sent not later than 1 March to ensure the package doesn't arrive after the soldier departs for. The mailing address for letters and packages is still:

Soldier's Name (without rank)
240th Engineer Group
APO AE 09354



**Bayonet!
Forward!**

"Of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man." Matthew 24:36-38.

When I was due to leave Bosnia, to where I was deployed in 1997, the first date for getting out was 15 October. I left my "FOB" on 27 October, two weeks later. Once out of there, I was told I would be home on November 10th; on the morning of November 5th, they told me to pack my bags; I was on my way to Maine.

I tell you this story so that we all don't get too hung up on the dates: the date we will leave Afghanistan, the date we will get home to Maine. The more expectations we have about that day, the more likely to be disappointed, or surprised, as my wife was that Wednesday over nine years ago. Once we get to Atterbury, many things will become clearer, but please don't let yourselves go crazy about the "whens." You will feel much better if you do.

As I am sure you know, another Brigade here in Afghanistan, an Active Duty unit, was extended for several months; as you also know, we have NOT been extended, at least NOT as of 31 January, and we don't expect to be. I know that many of you have attended or will attend the Family Reunion Briefings; please do so if you have not yet. These are full of information and even some general dates.

We have overcome our post-Christmas slump and are doing quite well. We are working hard and accomplishing three times as much as the unit before us with about a quarter less people. You can be very proud of your Maine Guardsmen; I know I am.

God Bless You,

Article submitted by CH (LTC) Andy Gibson

